

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently amended): A method for inhibiting the degradation of at least one of CREBL1 (cAMP responsive element binding protein-like 1), ATF6 (activating transcription factor 6), ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$  (hepatocyte nuclear factor-4 $\alpha$ ), comprising inhibiting the function of HtrA2 (high temperature requirement protein A2).
2. (Currently amended): The method for inhibiting the degradation of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$  according to claim 1, in which to inhibit the function of HtrA2 is to inhibit the cleavage by HtrA2 of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$  , wherein to inhibit the cleavage by HtrA2 of CREBL1 brings inhibition of the degradation of CREBL1, to inhibit the cleavage by HtrA2 of ATF6 brings inhibition of the degradation of ATF6, and to inhibit the cleavage by HtrA2 of HNF-4 $\alpha$  brings inhibition of the degradation of HNF-4 $\alpha$ .
3. (Currently amended): The method for inhibiting the degradation of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$  according to claim 1, in which to inhibit the function of HtrA2 is to inhibit the interaction of the HtrA2 with at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ , wherein to inhibit the interaction of the HtrA2 with CREBL1 brings inhibition of the degradation of CREBL1, to inhibit the interaction of the HtrA2 with ATF6 brings inhibition of the degradation of ATF6, and to inhibit the interaction of the HtrA2 with HNF-4 $\alpha$  brings inhibition of the degradation of HNF-4 $\alpha$ .
4. (Currently amended): A method for preventing and/or treating diabetes, comprising inhibiting the degradation by HtrA2 of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ .

5. (Currently amended): A method for preventing and/or treating diabetes, comprising ~~using~~ utilizing the method for inhibiting the degradation of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, and HNF-4 $\alpha$  according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~.

6. (Currently amended): A method for preventing and/or treating diabetes according to claim 4, comprising ~~using~~ administering one or more compounds that inhibit the degradation by HtrA2 of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ .

7. (Currently amended): An agent for preventing and/or treating diabetes or for inhibiting cell death, comprising one or more compounds that inhibit the degradation by HtrA2 of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ .

8. (Currently amended): A method of identifying ~~a compound~~ an agent of claim 7 that inhibits the degradation by HtrA2 of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, and HNF-4 $\alpha$ , comprising contacting at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$  and/or HtrA2 with a compound (a test compound) under conditions that allow the degradation by HtrA2 of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ ; introducing a system using a signal and/or a marker capable of detecting at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ ; detecting the presence or absence and/or change of the signal and/or the marker; and determining whether the test compound inhibits the degradation of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ .

9. (Currently amended): A method of identifying ~~a compound~~ an agent of claim 7 that inhibits the degradation by HtrA2 of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ , comprising contacting at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$  and/or HtrA2 with a compound (a test compound) under conditions that allow the degradation by HtrA2 of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ ; detecting the presence or absence of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ , and/or measuring the change of the amount thereof; or detecting the

presence or absence of the degradation product of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ , and/or measuring the change of the amount thereof ; and determining whether the test compound inhibits the degradation of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$ .

10. (Currently amended): The method according to claim 8 ~~or~~ 9, wherein the method of identifying ~~a compound~~ an agent that inhibits the degradation by HtrA2 of at least one of CREBL1, ATF6, ~~and~~ or HNF-4 $\alpha$  is a method of identifying a compound that is an active ingredient in an agent for preventing and/or treating diabetes.

11. (Original): A method for inhibiting cell death, comprising inhibiting the degradation by HtrA2 of CREBL1 and/or ATF6.

12. (Currently amended): A method for inhibiting cell death according to claim 11, comprising ~~using~~ utilizing one or more compounds that inhibit the degradation by HtrA2 of CREBL1 and/or ATF6.

13. (Currently amended): The method for inhibiting cell death according to claim 11 ~~or~~ 12, in which the cell death is cell death of a pancreatic  $\beta$  cell.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended): The agent for inhibiting cell death according to claim 14 7, wherein the cell death is cell death of a pancreatic  $\beta$  cell.

16. (Currently amended): A method for preventing and/or treating diabetes, comprising using the method for inhibiting cell death according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 11 ~~to 13~~.

17. (Currently amended): A The method of claim 4 for preventing and/or treating type 2 diabetes, comprising inhibiting the degradation by HtrA2 of HNF-4 $\alpha$ .

18. (Currently amended): ~~A~~ The agent of claim 7 for preventing and/or treating type 2 diabetes, comprising one or more compounds that inhibit the degradation by HtrA2 of HNF-4 $\alpha$ .

19. (Original): A reagent kit, comprising at least one selected from the group consisting of HtrA2, a polynucleotide encoding HtrA2, and a vector containing the polynucleotide encoding HtrA2; and at least one selected from the group consisting of CREBL1, ATF6, HNF-4 $\alpha$ , a polynucleotide encoding CREBL1 or ATF6 or HNF-4 $\alpha$ , and a vector containing the polynucleotide encoding CREBL1 or ATF6 or HNF-4 $\alpha$ .